

Metaphorical Perceptions of Teachers, Principals and Staff on School Management

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Abstract

It is necessary to know how the members of a school perceive their school management to investigate how they are related to their organizations. In this case, we can refer to metaphors, which are excellent tools for people to express their subconscious thoughts and perceptions about their organizations. On the other hand, metaphors help us to understand the estimations of school management by the members of school organizations. In the literature review, no study could be found about perceptions of teachers, principals and also staff on school management. So, it can be said that conducting this research will fill this gap in the literature. The aim of this study is to examine metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on school management. According to the findings; 45 metaphors by female participants, 20 metaphors by male participants, 50 metaphors by teachers, 9 metaphors by principals and 6 metaphors by staff, 42 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 11 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 8 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years, 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over were created about their own school management. The most produced metaphor is a family metaphor. 41 metaphors by female participants, 25 metaphors by male participants, 50 metaphors by teachers, 10 metaphors by principals, 6 metaphors by staff, 43 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 10 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 6 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 5 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years and 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over were created on ideal school management. The most produced metaphor again is family metaphor. Conducting metaphor researches about school management is seen useful for school improvement and will ensure benefits to researchers and practitioners. Moreover, metaphors are valuable imagery tools can be used by researchers and practitioners to provide clarity to complex issues to describe real situations in school management.

Keywords: metaphor, school management, teachers, principals, staff

1. Introduction

As other organizations, schools consist of individuals that are responsible to achieve organizational goals. The main components of school are students, teachers, parents and administrators. Coordinating these components for school goals is the task of school management. Principals are responsible for school management and they are leaders to protect structure of school system (Bursalioğlu, 1976). Principals are supposed to cooperate with students, teachers and parents during management activities. This cooperation will affect perceptions in the mind of students, teachers and parents about management. These perceptions also affect relationship between these individuals and principals and educational activities. On the other hand, for school principals, to know how they are perceived by other people is important. If school principal knows thoughts about himself or herself, it will ensure the continuation of positive behaviors or result the negative behaviors (Yalçın & Erginer, 2012).

Cognitive linguistics theorists and researchers define metaphor, as the analogy between two conceptual structures (Steen, 2007). Morgan (1991) describes metaphor as "a form that helps us to think and see the world". Metaphors are clear, intensive and explanatory (Ortony, 2000), they affect individuals' expressions, behaviors, emotions and provide individuals to express themselves while shaping their expressions (Morgan, 1998).

Inbar (1996) found students created metaphors like factory, prison, garden, family, team, zoo about school. Cerit (2008) found students describe teachers like information source and distributor, parent and friend. Ekiz & Koçyiğit (2012) found teacher metaphors were determined under the theme of "raiser and developer". The primary school teachers perceive metaphors as how to be teacher, the roles of teachers and their educational approaches. Ünal, Yıldırım & Çelik (2010) found metaphors about parents, created by school managers and teachers were grouped in 9 themes. These themes are as follows: protective parent theme, finance source parent theme, bossy parent theme, nitpicking parent theme, self-interested parent theme, dreamer parent theme, open-to-change parent theme, unaware parent theme, indifferent parent theme.

It is known that metaphors play aesthetical, ornamental and pedagogical role in education (Botha, 2009).

Conducting metaphor researches about school management is seen useful for school improvement. The opinions of teachers, principals and staff are essential for management of school. The aim of this study is to examine metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on school management and so it will be determined whether these metaphorical perceptions differ according to demographic variables of participants.

The research questions were determined as below:

1. What are the metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on school management?
2. What are the metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on ideal school management?
3. Do the metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on school management differ according to their demographic variables?

2. Methods

2.1. Research Method

The study is based on qualitative research approach. These types of researches are much easier to plan and carry out because the experiences that individuals have are systematically examined in qualitative researches (Ekiz, 2003). Qualitative research involves looking in-depth at non-numerical data. Research design is determined as phenomenological research. These researches focus on cases that are observed and analysed in depth (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

2.2. Study Group

The sample is determined by convenience sampling method and it consists of 80 principals, teachers and staff in Izmir. This method gives researchers speed and practicality, and researchers select the state which is close and easy to access (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

	Groups	n	%
Gender	Female	59	74
	Male	21	26
	Total	80	100
Position	Principal	9	11
	Teacher	65	81
	Staff	6	8
	Total	80	100
Seniority in school	1-5 years	51	64
	6-10 years	14	18
	11-15 years	8	10
	16-20 years	4	5
	21 years and over	3	3
	Total	80	100

2.3. Data Collection

In this study, semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers were used in order to investigate metaphorical perceptions of teachers, principals and staff on school management. Demographic characteristics of the participants were asked in the first part and the following questions were asked to the participants in the second part of the form:

What do you think school management of your school look like and why?

What do you think ideal school management look like and why?

The main data for the study is consisted of responses for these questions.

2.4. Data analysis

Data obtained from semi-structured interview form is analyzed by content analysis. Content analysis reveals codes and categories from raw data (Patton, 2002). For validity and reliability, data analysis process is explained in detail; interpretation of the data involved the participants' own direct statements, and the necessary explanations are provided in the section of findings regarding all the metaphors produced. Another factor important for validity is consistency between related studies (Ratcliff, 1995). Validity and reliability of this study are provided.

3. Results

Data obtained from semi-structured interview was analyzed and findings are as follows:

Table 2. Metaphors on school management according to gender

Gender	Metaphors
Female	moon, football team, family, boat, trivet, family, official institute, family, scales, life coach, human, guide, a whole, family, machine, state system, gardener, machine, mirror, family, business firm, clock, bell glass, 3 wise monkeys, tree, marketing company, clock, factory, bag of potato, stone, brain, tree, root of tree, machine, watermelon, chain, brain storm, building, factory, battlefield, company, ferris wheel, engine of car, family, bird
Male	table, piston, machine, library, hand, octopus, statue, ice, official institute, sea, machine, building, fructiferous branch of tree, human head, jigsaw, farm, boomerang, family, computer processor, brain,

As seen in the table; 45 metaphors were created by female participants and 20 metaphors were created by male participants. In total, 65 metaphors were produced. The most produced metaphor is family. Family metaphore was repeated 5 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was machine and it was repeated 5 times. Machine metaphore was repeated 3 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants. Other metaphors were repeated one or twice. The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like a family. I feel myself at home with them." (P3)

"Ideal school management is like a tree. Tree is a living icon. The work done by educators is vital. The branches of tree represent school staff and the body of tree represents the administration." (P6)

Table 3. Metaphors on ideal school management according to gender

Gender	Metaphors
Female	world, rainbow, family, peace, composition, trivet, family, management of human, family, white light, teacher, teamwork, life coach, protector, home, people hand in hand, peace, parliamentarism, match, tool, stream, artist, happiness, orchestra, home, light, trivet, choir, cell, castle, brain, ant, tree, poem, jigsaw, building, family, night, sun, home, family
Male	anthill, my school, heart, octopus, wheel, tree, sun, factory, engine of car, ocean, family, tolerance, respect, communication, interaction, sharing, meeting, trust, goodness, care, football, tree, family, computer processor, brain

As seen in the table; 41 metaphors on ideal school management were created by female participants and 25 metaphors were created by male participants. In total, 66 metaphors were produced. Most produced metaphor is family. The family was repeated 5 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants, it was repeated 7 times in total. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was tree and it was repeated 3 times. Other metaphors were repeated once.

The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like an octopus. They want to do everything on their own." (P8)

"Ideal school management is like an orchestra. Compatible instruments should be played" (P11)

Table 4. Metaphors on school management according to titles

Title	Metaphors
Teacher	engine of car, ferris wheel, battlefield, factory, farm, jigsaw, building, brain storm, chain, watermelon, head of human, machine, tree, fructiferous branch of tree, brain, building, machine, sea, stone, bag of potato, factory, clock, marketing company, tree, 3 wise monkeys, official institute, bell glass, clock, business firm, family, mirror, machine, gardener, state system, statue, ostopuc, machine, family, hand, a whole, library, protector, life coach, bird, scales, machine, guide, brain, root of tree, ice
Principal	company, boat, football team, table, moon, boomerang, family, family, computer processor
Staff	family, family, family, piston, official institute, trivet,

As seen in the table; 50 metaphors about school management were created by teachers, 9 metaphors were created by principals and 6 metaphors were created by staff. The family metaphore was repeated twice by teachers, was repeated twice by principal and was repeated 3 times by staff. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was machine and it was repeated by teachers 5 times. Other metaphors were repeated once or twice.

The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like a machine. Because administrators are working in harmony with each other." (P15)

"Ideal school management is like a home. In this home people must have understanding, tolerance, empathy, respect, love etc." (P5)

Table 5. Metaphors on ideal school management according to titles

Title	Metaphors
Teacher	home, night, sun, meeting, football, tolerance, respect, communication, interaction, sharing, trust, goodness, care, family, building, family, jigsaw, poem, tree, ant, brain, ocean, engine of car, castle, cell, choir, trivet, light, home, orchestra, factory, artist, stream, tool, match, parliamentarism, tree, wheel, octopus, peace, people hand in hand, heart, home, life coach, teamwork, teacher, white light, happiness, brain, protector
Principal	composition, peace, anthill, world, rainbow, tree, family, family, computer processor, sun
Staff	family, family, family, management of human, trivet, my school

As seen in the table; 50 metaphors about ideal school management were created by teachers, 10 metaphors were created by principals and 6 metaphors were created by staff. Family metaphore was repeated by teachers twice, by principals twice and by staff 3 times. Tree metaphore was repeated by teachers twice and by principals once. Other metaphors were repeated once. The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like marketing company. Because satisfaction of parents is so important." (P30)

"Ideal school management is like a life coach. They must be aware of the internal and external situations of school." (P32)

Table 6. Metaphors on school management according to seniority in school

Seniority in school	Metaphors
1-5 years	boomerang, family, family, computer processor, brain, engine of car, family, family, boat, football team, moon, farm, jigsaw, brain storm, chain, brain, building, machine, sea, stone, factory, clock, tree, marketing company, 3 wise monkeys, clock, family, gardener, state system, statue, guide, scales, machine, factory, root of tree, library, piston, table, ice, life coach, protector, tree
6-10 years	trivet, family, company, watermelon, machine, official institute, bell glass, mirror, machine, family, machine
11-15 years	ferris wheel, head of human, fructiferous branch of tree, bag of potato, business firm, octopus, a whole, bird
16-20 years	battlefield, tree
21 years and over	building, hand

As seen in the table; 42 metaphors about school management were created by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 11 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 8 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years, 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over. The family metaphore was repeated 5 times by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and twice by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years. Machine was repeated twice by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and 3 times by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years. Other metaphors were repeated once or twice. The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like a puzzle each pieces of it is important." (P52)

"Ideal school management is like white light. It consists of every colors." (P50)

Table 7. Metaphors on ideal school management according to seniority in school

Seniority in school	Metaphors
1-5 years	tree, family, family, computer processor, brain, family, family, composition, peace, anthill, world, rainbow, meeting, football, tolerance, respect, communication, interaction, sharing, trust, goodness, care, family, ant, brain, ocean, engine of car, castle, cell, trivet, orchestra, home, light, match, parliamentarism, tree, protector, life coach, white light, my school, happiness, people hand in hand, sun
6-10 years	trivet, family, home, building, jigsaw, poem, factory, stream, tool, teacher
11-15 years	family, choir, artist, octopus, home, teamwork
16-20 years	management of human, night, sun, tree, wheel
21 years and over	peace, heart

As seen in the table; 43 metaphors about ideal school management of their school were created by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 10 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 6 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 5 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years and 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over. The family metaphore was repeated 5 times by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and once by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years and once by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years. Tree was repeated twice by participants whose seniority in school is

1-5 years and once by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years. Other metaphors were repeated once. The statements of participants about metaphors were as follows:

"My school management is like moon. Because it has two face, dark and bright." (P28)

"Ideal school management is like a rainbow. Children are as motley. The management should protect them." (P17)

4. Discussion

According to the findings; about school management, 45 metaphors were created by female participants and 20 metaphors were created by male participants. In total, 65 metaphors were produced. Most produced metaphor is family. Family metaphor was repeated 5 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants. Günbayi's (2011) study reveals that school management is a collective activity. Çobanoğlu & Gökpal (2015) found that school managers were mostly associated with the metaphors of "father, mother, lion, dictator, shepherd. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was machine and it was repeated 5 times. Machine metaphor was repeated 3 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants. Other metaphors were repeated one or twice. Balci (1999) found that metaphors like disciplinary, authoritarian, vulgar, harmful and insensitive were produced for principals. Cerit (2008) found principals were regarded by students, teachers and principals as mother/father, caring, authority, king, boss, gardener and judge at medium and low levels. Among the views of participants, there are no differences according to gender.

About ideal school management of their school, 41 metaphors were created by female participants and 25 metaphors were created by male participants. In total, 66 metaphors were produced. Most produced metaphor is family. The family was repeated 5 times by female participants and was repeated twice by male participants, it was repeated 7 times in total. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was tree and it was repeated 3 times. Other metaphors were repeated once. Yalçın & Erginer (2012) found that the metaphors included positive perceptions of the participants. Directors were mostly considered to protect the students and the teachers, who try hard to establish an environment of confidence at school and who act as a guide and leader for the students.

About school management, 50 metaphors were created by teachers, 9 metaphors were created by principals and 6 metaphors were created by staff. The family metaphor was repeated twice by teachers, was repeated twice by principal and was repeated 3 times by staff. The second most frequently repeated metaphor was machine and it was repeated by teachers 5 times. Other metaphors were repeated once or twice. Yıldırım & Uğur (2011) found that high school students created metaphors as prohibitive, collect money, prescriptive, authoritarian, old, discriminatory about principal. They also created metaphors as understanding, tolerant, experienced and knowledgeable about ideal principal. Cerit (2008) found principals were regarded by students, teachers and principals as mother/father, caring, authority, king, boss, gardener and judge at medium and low levels. Among the views of participants, there are no differences according to educational state.

About ideal school management of their school, 50 metaphors were created by teachers, 10 metaphors were created by principals and 6 metaphors were created by staff. Family metaphor was repeated by teachers twice, by principals twice and by staff 3 times. Tree metaphor was repeated by teachers twice and by principals once. Other metaphors were repeated once. According to Cerit's (2006) research results about school metaphors were listed as follows as the place of knowledge and enlightenment, growing up and maturity, change and development, and family and team were accepted, metaphors such as a chaotic environment, prison, factory, office and shopping center were not considered and school has been perceived as a place of knowledge and information, change and improvement, and a supportive environment.

About school management, 42 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 11 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 8 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years, 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over. The family metaphor was repeated 5 times by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and twice by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years. Machine was repeated twice by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and 3 times by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years. Other metaphors were repeated once or twice. Cerit (2008) found principals were regarded by students, teachers and principals as mother/father, caring, authority, king, boss, gardener and judge at medium and low levels. Among the views of participants, there are no differences according to seniority. Çobanoğlu & Gökpal found teacher candidates mostly associated school managers with the metaphors of "father, mother, lion, dictator, shepherd."

About ideal school management of their school, 43 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 10 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 6 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 5 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years and 2 metaphors were created by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over. The family metaphor was repeated 5 times by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and once by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years and once by

whose seniority in school is 11-15 years. Tree was repeated twice by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years and once by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years. Other metaphors were repeated once. Akan, Yalçın & Yıldırım (2014) found teachers represented school managers using the metaphors of commander, soldier, computer, pencil and manager. The collocation of functions between the school and the family gives a secure basis for modelling one on the other; and the development of the metaphor school is family out of that collocation over the past century has created a distinctive, student-centred approach to education (Baldi, 2010).

5. Conclusion

According to the findings; 45 metaphors by female participants, 20 metaphors by male participants, 50 metaphors by teachers, 9 metaphors by principals and 6 metaphors by staff, 42 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 11 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 8 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years, 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over were created about their own school management. Most produced metaphor is family. 41 metaphors by female participants, 25 metaphors by male participants, 50 metaphors by teachers, 10 metaphors by principals, 6 metaphors by staff, 43 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 1-5 years, 10 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 6-10 years, 6 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 11-15 years, 5 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 16-20 years and 2 metaphors by participants whose seniority in school is 21 years and over were created on ideal school management. Most produced metaphor is family. This can be said that school personnel believe an ideal school management must be like a family. This research can be repeated with other samples, materials and methods. The findings of this study and their causes can be researched. Conducting metaphor researches about school management is essential and useful for researchers and practitioners.

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